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Reviews, Critiques, and Annotations

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REVIEWS, CRITIQUES, AND ANNOTATIONS

Nearby History: Exploring the Past Around You. By David E. Kyvig and Myron A. Marty. Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1982. Pp.xiii, 300. Illustrations, appendices, index. \$15.95

Sometimes a book comes along which exactly fills a need, meets its purpose, and fits its audience. Nearby History is such a publication. The two authors have written forthrightly, concisely, and wittily and have managed in the process to offer an enormous amount of information. The book covers the essential areas of local historical concern, what they are and how to use them--whether they involve published and unpublished records, photographs, artifacts, buildings, or even immaterial things such as rituals and customs.

Each chapter is devoted to a separate kind of historical source material for local historians to use in telling their stories. Each chapter is, in essence, a primer on the techniques and materials of such diverse but important local historical undertakings, as oral history, historic preservation, taking and analyzing photographs, finding and describing artifacts, and so on. To assist the users further, the authors have provided extensive bibliographies at the end of each chapter and a series of appendices showing standard forms and formats used in museum and archival agreements, listings of support agencies (such as regional branches of NARS and state NEH committees) and survey forms and local ordinances for historic preservation. As if that were not enough, the book is full of examples and illustrations--edited portions of actual local histories, photographic case studies, maps, and sample interviews.

Nearby History is intended primarily to assist beginners and students of local history, but it is far more useful than that and should reach a broad audience. It will serve as a provocative reminder to professionals in all roles of the level of personal engagement involved in local history, of the controversies inherent in many local historical questions, and of the limitations of using any single technique in approaching the study of a place and its people.

This book pulls no punches while it informs. Kyvig and Marty deliver their messages in a straightforward manner which tells the reader what is necessary to know, what is easy and what is hard to do, where the traps are, and what the rewards and pleasures are likely to be in historical research. Nearby History is recommended as a handbook for all parties involved in local historical inquiry.

Editors

A Manual of Archival Techniques. Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1982. Pp. 134. Paper.

Guide to County and Municipal Records on Microfilm in the Pennsylvania State Archives. Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1982. Pp. 50. Paper.

A Manual of Archival Techniques is a revised edition of a work first published in 1979 and reviewed in the spring 1981 Georgia Archive. The 134-page manual contains an introduction, ten articles on various aspects of archival knowledge, four articles on agencies from which to seek help, an appendix, and a bibliography. All the articles are brief, some consisting of only three pages and the longest being nine pages.

This 1982 edition is only slightly different from the first: James W. Williams replaces Samuel Murray on "Storage, Space and Equipment"; an article on

bookbinding has been replaced by Lois Olcott Price's "Phased Conservation for Books and Bound Archival Material"; and Sarah D. Holland has updated the article on the Pennsylvania Humanities Council, which in 1979 was the Public Committee for the Humanities in Pennsylvania.

The other eight articles on techniques deal with appraisal and arrangement of textual material, photographs, and maps; reference services; security; disaster planning; and first steps in preservation. Section Five describes two Pennsylvania and two federal agencies that offer assistance to archival repositories. The appendix provides samples of forms, terminology for photographic and print processes, and a do-it-yourself security checklist. The bibliography has been expanded, especially in the fields of appraisal and accessions, maps, space utilization, and bookbinding, while a bibliography on grant writing is entirely new.

This manual is aimed at beginning archivists and curators and at those persons working in agencies where technical expertise and finances are likely in short supply. Ms. Price's article on phased conservation, as an example, focuses clearly on techniques that are within the capabilities of most repositories. She realistically states that proper environmental conditions, proper shelving, and proper protective housing (folders, envelopes, boxes) constitute the bulk of a sound conservation program. In regard to more advanced conservation problems, she advises caution and the seeking of professional assistance and training. This same regard for the needs of the intended audience characterizes most of the articles. The three weaker articles--those on security, description of textual records, and appraisal and arrangement of textual records--are weak because they lose sight of this audience.

All manuscript repositories would do well to make this volume required reading for new staff members.

The 50-page Guide to County and Municipal Records on Microfilm in the Pennsylvania State

Archives will be very useful to anyone interested in doing grass roots research in the Keystone State. Guides of this type should be comprehensive, sensibly designed, and uncluttered, and this one is. The 4,984 rolls of 35mm microfilm contain five million pages of records covering the period from 1682 to the present.

The Guide format continues the practice of the state archives of placing county and municipal records into two different record groups. Except for minutes, which are normally listed first, the office or bureau records that constitute each county or municipal listing are arranged alphabetically. The date of creation and county seat are given for each of the fifty-five counties, and the incorporation date and county are provided for each of the 106 municipalities. Inclusive dates of the records and the number of rolls of microfilm involved complete the listing for each record series.

With the appearance of these two fine volumes, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) has established a solid publishing foundation on which to build. The editors, Roland M. Baumann of A Manual and Nancy L.P. Fortna and Frank M. Suran of the Guide have set a high standard. Those in the archives and research communities can only hope that the PHMC will continue its interest in publications in these areas.

Robert Dinwiddie

Georgia State University

American Indian Archival Material: A Guide to Holdings in the Southeast. Compiled by Ron Chepesiuk and Arnold Shankman. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982. Pp.xvi, 325. \$39.95.

This volume represents the first published regional guide to manuscript material in Indian history. It proposes to serve an increasing scholarly interest

in Indian affairs and follows on the heels of several other bibliographical and research tool compilations. These include the CLIO press bibliographical release based on America: Life and History and Historical Abstracts, the establishment by the Newberry Library of an Indian study center, and the seminal publication, Bibliographical Guide to the History of Indian-White Relations in the United States.

The compilers note that there has been much written on southeastern Indians--much of it without benefit of manuscript material. Since most of the scholarly work on southeastern Indians has either been done by archaeologists and ethnohistorians who rely more heavily on oral traditions and on field work than on documentary sources or by historians who rely on documents but omit coverage of the Indians, this situation is understandable. The recent attempts to collect, edit, and publish the papers of Chief John Ross of the Cherokees are a notable exception, and the Chepesiuk-Shankman guide may encourage additional professional and scholastic broadening.

The collections represented in this volume are numerous and some of them quite rich. The reported holdings include everything from news clippings to photographs to large collections of private papers. Indeed, there are surprises in store: significant oral history collections at the Universities of Florida, South Carolina, and Kentucky and records of Indian students at Hampton Institute, for example.

The guide is organized with utter simplicity--by state, by city, and then by repository within the cities. The listings tend toward inconsistency in the level of information which they give, which is typical of a questionnaire compilation and not a serious fault. Occasionally, the content and pertinence to the subject of Indian affairs is not obvious, but more often than not, the information is straightforward and useful. This book is an ideal selection for archivists who need to make recommendations to researchers and an ideal sourcebook for researchers.

Editors

Windows to the Past: A Selection of Illinois County Records from 1818 to 1880. By Roy C. Turnbaugh, Jr., with Robert E. Bailey. Springfield: Illinois State Archives, 1982. Pp. 114.

Physically, Windows to the Past is a teaching aid featuring thirty-eight photographic facsimiles of documents from Illinois county records. Following a brief introduction and suggestions for additional reading, a transcription, explanation, list of new words and terms, and questions for discussion are provided for each document. The documents are not all related to the same topic; each stands separately. This decision not to focus on a specific event or person or location is the one aspect of this publication with which some teachers may find fault.

Intellectually, three trends appear to have come together to influence this project. One is the growing interest in local history and its increased importance in the curriculum of elementary and secondary schools. The revolt of twenty years ago in the secondary schools against required courses, lectures, memorization, and homework forced history teachers to revise their teaching methods. If students were allowed to be their own historians, they would have to go to the sources to do research. This meant that many history teachers turned their students loose on oral history or local history projects. Fortunately, this practice has become much more sophisticated with the assistance of numerous helpful publications, many sponsored by the American Association for State and Local History. In Illinois, Windows to the Past will become one of the most useful teaching aids for state history.

A second trend exhibited here is the booming interest in the history of common people, i.e., social history. As both student and teacher in Illinois, the Land of Lincoln, the reviewer remembers

Illinois history was actually taught as "the life and times of Abraham Lincoln." Windows to the Past is a significant contribution to improving upon that tradition. Abraham Lincoln is not the subject of any of the thirty-eight documents, and he is barely mentioned in the introduction; though mentioned he is, probably in compliance with some state law. Rather, the concerns and variety of the documents reproduced can perhaps best be demonstrated by listing a few of the document types: military land patent, jail diagram, tavern license, apprentice indenture, overseer of the poor claim, and mine inspection report. The sum of the documents is not a history of the state or county governments from 1818 to 1880, but rather a suggestion of how average people lived as reflected in their dealings with government.

The third trend is the effort of archives to increase their budgets through outreach programs. This trend has been hurt by state and federal budget decisions of the last three years. Certainly outreach is the new item on many archives budgets, and it may suffer from the same fate feared by women and blacks in a faltering economy, "Last hired, first fired." Nonetheless, the theory that increasing public interest in archives will lead to increased budgets still prevails among archivists. But along with obtaining original funding for outreach, another problem has been the type of outreach to pursue. All too often archivists have encouraged teachers to bring their students to archival facilities for "exciting personal research" without proper preparation of the students or even the teachers. The reviewer's first exposure to archival research included more of a feeling of helpless, hopeless floundering than of creative discovery, and it is doubtful that this is an unique response. Windows to the Past overcomes the numerous problems of original research by students by publishing selected documents for their perusal and by providing teachers with a guide on the use of the documents. In short, Windows to the Past will not only be used by the history

teachers of Illinois, but also serve as a model for archival institutions seeking to develop or enhance outreach programs.

Martin I. Elzy

Carter Presidential Materials Project

From Cotton to Quail: An Agricultural Chronicle of Leon County, Florida, 1860-1967. By Clifton Paisley. Reprint. Tallahassee: University Presses of Florida, 1981. Pp.vii, 162. Preface, photographs, footnotes, bibliography, index.

First published in 1968 in a limited run, assuming that few people were interested in an agricultural topic, Paisley's From Cotton to Quail has become one of the most xeroxed items in Florida history. Because of its immense popularity, the University Presses of Florida waived their long-standing prohibition on reprints and reissued the book in 1981.

It is easy to see why From Cotton to Quail has such a following. Paisley is a good writer and his extended career as a journalist has enabled him to relieve the tedium of a work about plantation agriculture and farm productivity. Paisley, furthermore, really enjoys his subject and probably knows the red hills of Leon County, Florida as well as his own home. The research is solid, although limited in that major collections at the national archives in Washington and recent monographs like Jerrell Shofner's definitive study of Reconstruction Florida (Nor Is It Over Yet) are not used.

The vicissitudes of antebellum cash crop agriculture and principally plantation cotton cultivation are the subject of the first chapter, which is really background for Paisley's topic. The reader learns a lot about individual producers and quantities of commodities, and since Paisley's objective, as stated in this title--agricultural chronicle--is to present this material in a narrative

recitation, there is little or no analysis. Although the subjects may have been outside the author's scope, the freeze of 1835, the beginning of the Second Seminole War late that same year, the onset of the national depression in 1837, and the demise of the Union Bank in the 1840s would seem to merit some attention.

Post-Civil War Leon County agriculture is dealt with in the succeeding chapter, and here again, Paisley emphasizes lists of producers and commodities. Although the author did not use the Freedmen's Bureau Records (Record Group 105) at the national archives, this omission is probably not significant given the focus of attention of From Cotton to Quail.

As Paisley advances into the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, his control of the material is more evident, and the last three chapters make a real contribution to understanding the evolution of southern farming in the southern Georgia and middle Florida region. It is evident that farmers in Leon County were adapting to changing production and market conditions and that profits, rather than politics, were the focus of their attention. Paisley's documentation for these chapters is impressive; other sources that could have been used would have been redundant.

This is a good book and well worth having for anyone interested in middle Florida agriculture. The reviewer certainly looks forward to Paisley's forthcoming monograph The Red Hills of Florida.

Michael Schene
National Park Service

Automating the Archives: Issues and Problems in Computer Applications. Edited by Lawrence McCrank. White Plains, N. Y.: Knowledge Industry, 1981. Pp. 363. Paper. \$27.50.

The papers in this volume emphasize the

application of computers to archives and manuscripts rather than machine-readable records and come from a symposium held at the University of Maryland in April 1980. Since then, advances in the field of archives automation have made this collection interesting only from a historical standpoint. However, that is quite enough to recommend it. For anyone who wishes to understand today's developments, this volume will serve as an excellent introduction to what has come before.

In addition, the broad overview of the central questions of automation presented in the keynote addresses and in the section on needs assessment and priorities are still relevant. Editor Lawrence McCrank's comments are interspersed throughout and are helpful in pulling the conference's divergent themes together.

It is hoped that conferences of this nature will become regular events and that proceedings can find their way into print in time to inform the profession of developments in this rapidly changing field.

Robert Bohanan

Carter Presidential Materials Project

NOTE: Greenwood Press (88 Post Road West, P.O. Box 5007, Westport, Connecticut 06881) recently published the first in a series of guides to state and local history. A Guide to the History of Louisiana, edited by Light Townsend Cummins and Glen Jeansonne, has xi and 298 pages and is priced at \$35. Volumes in the series will consist of historiographical essays and descriptions of major collections of primary sources. The publishers intend the series to be of use to both professional and amateur historians.

The second and third volumes of the Greenwood Press series History of Black Americans by Philip S. Foner have been published. Ranging from 500 to 700 pages, the three volumes are (1) From Africa to the Emergence of the Cotton Kingdom, 1975, \$45; (2) From

the Emergence of the Cotton Kingdom to the Eve of the Compromise of 1850, 1983, \$45; and (3) From the Compromise of 1850 to the End of the Civil War, 1983, \$39.95.

Guide to Research Collections of Former United States Senators, 1789-1982. Edited by Kathryn Allamong Jacob and Elizabeth Ann Hornyak. Historical Office, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510. Pp. viii, 362. Photographs. Paper.

A free copy of this valuable research tool may be obtained from the address above, and all institutions receiving inquiries concerning the papers of United States Senators will wish to do so. Another example of the fine work of the Senate Historical Office, the Guide provides information on the location of former senators' manuscript collections, oral history interview transcripts, memorabilia, photographs, and portraits as reported by 350 research institutions in the United States. State lists of former senators and a list of repositories showing senators' collections in their custody follows the primary alphabetical list of senators.

The Great Savannah Races. By Julian K. Quattlebaum. Athens: University of Georgia Press. \$19.95.

Originally privately published, the University of Georgia Press has added photographs and other information for this republication in the Brown Thrasher Books series. The International Grand Prix auto races were held on Savannah's seashell paved roads in 1908, 1910, and 1911.

Guide to the Roebling Collections. Edited by Eliza-

beth C. Stewart with an introduction by Robert M. Vogel. Published by the Friends of the Folsom Library, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Available prepaid only for \$15. from the Institute Archives, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, New York 12181.

Civil engineers John Roebling and his son, Washington, participated in design and construction of the Brooklyn Bridge and several other important American bridges. This volume describes the manuscripts, photographs, designs, and plans in the Roebling Collection at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and lists the Roebling materials at Rutgers University.

The Existential Archivist: A Book of Aphorisms. By Mary Boccaccio and Katie Kirwan. 1983. Pp. 22. Paper. May be ordered for \$5.00 from Mary Boccaccio, 9 Jute Road, Rock Point, New York 11778.

Each page of this privately published, light-hearted pamphlet consists of an aphorism concerning archival work accompanied by an appropriate illustration.

NOTE: Archivists may wish to write the Office of Management Studies, Association of Research Libraries (1527 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20036), concerning the following publications related to library management: Budget Allocation Systems for Research Libraries, by John Vasi, Occasional Paper Number 7; Integrated Library Information Systems in ARL Libraries, SPEC Kit Number 90; and Student Assistants in ARL Libraries, SPEC Kit Number 91.